3445, New Castle Comm School

PROJECT ABSTRACT

NCCSC is a district serving just over 2000 elementary students in seven neighborhood based K-6 schools ranging in size from 167 to 382. The population of students qualifying for free and reduced lunch has risen to 48% for the corporation. Currently, we have two elementary schools with less than 30%, two between 45%-60%, two between 70%-80%, and one above 80% of the student population qualifying for free and reduced lunch. NCCSC is currently in year 2 of corporation improvement.

Our proposed project focuses on improving student learning in Language Arts and Math through content, instruction, and assessment. Technology must become a tool for student learning. To accomplish this, it must assist in sharing content that meets or exceeds Indiana Academic Standards, provide engaging instructional methods that enhance classroom instruction, foster immediate opportunities for assessing the level of student understanding and performance, and provide information to the teachers regarding the assessment of student understanding so that teachers can make instructional adjustments to meet the needs of the individual students.

Our goal is to engage students by implementing an integrated plan that will enhance and expand teaching and learning by introducing new technologies and strengthening the use of current technology. Our goal is to provide each elementary school with access to at least two mobile SMART Board stations and 5 Netbook computers for each classroom at grades 3-6.

NCCSC implemented the use of common assessments in grades K-6 this year by implementing mCLASS Reading and Math assessments in grades K-2 and Acuity Diagnostic Assessments in grades 3-6. The technology provided through this grant will enable teachers to more effectively implement the learning activities provided through these programs as part of daily learning. Due to extremely limited computer access, netbooks provided to all schools will immediately increase the student access to taking assessments and completing assignments based on student performance on assessments using the Acuity program.

Funding will provide NCCSC the tools and professional development for reaching our goals to: (1) expand access of SMART Board and Netbook technologies; (2) effectively use technology to increase student academic achievement; and (3) increase the number of teachers making effective use of technology to enhance instruction, engage students, and address learning needs based on assessment data.

Experience with SMART Boards currently used in Warren Township has shown that technology tools are motivational and beneficial as long as they are used effectively by appropriately trained and supported staff

Grant funds will be used to address inequities in the availability of SMART Board technologies across its eleven elementary schools, by increasing the number of SMART Boards in six of its highest need buildings.

Funding will provide Warren Township the tools and professional development for reaching our goals to: (1) expand access of SMART Board technologies; (2) effectively use technology to increase student academic achievement; (3) increase the number of teachers making effective use of technology to enhance instruction, engage students, and address learning needs; and (4) to share SMART Board expertise with our partner district.

Goals will be met through a 3-pronged approach:

*Purchase and install 15 SMART Boards in 6 high-need schools in Warren and 2 SMART Boards in each of the 7 elementary schools in NCCSC

*Through hands-on, relevant trainings beginning February 2010 through April 2011, support teachers¿ effective use of technology

*Monitor the effectiveness of the project through goal-related formative and summative assessments

NEEDS/BASELINE

NCCSC is in the second year of Corporation Improvement and is in the beginning stages of implementing the 8 Step Process for Academic Success. During the 2009-2010 school year, elementary teachers will be addressing content, instruction, and assessment by developing common curriculum pacing guides and assessment calendars based on the Indiana Academic Standards in the areas of Language Arts and Math.

NCCSC implemented the use of common assessments in grades K-6 this year by implementing mCLASS Reading and Math assessments in grades K-2 and Acuity Diagnostic Assessments in grades 3-6. The technology provided through this grant will enable teachers to more effectively implement the learning activities provided through these programs as part of daily learning. Due to extremely limited computer access, Netbooks provided to all schools will immediately increase the student access to taking

assessments and completing assignments based on student performance on assessments using the Acuity program.

	Existing Netbooks in Building	# Added Thru Grant	SMART Board Added
Eastwood	238		3
Greenstreet	80		2
Parker	97		2
Riley	0	40	2
Sunnyside	64	40	2
Westwood	0	40	2
Wilbur Wright	100		2
Totals	579	120	15

Each of NCCSC's seven elementary schools currently use netbooks or computer labs, but the numbers of computers available vary across the district. Through grant funding, 120 additional Netbooks will be purchased and placed within three schools to ensure equitable distribution among schools. In addition, 2 mobile SMART Board will be placed at each building with this grant funding.

	Existing SMART Boards	# Added Thru Grant	Mentor Teachers
Lowell	13		3
Brookview	7		3
Hawthorne	7		
Lakeside	7		
Sunny Heights	7		
Liberty Park	6	1	3

Heather Hills	5	2
Moorhead	5	2
Eastridge	4	3
Grassy Creek	4	3
Pleasant Run	3	4
68	15	9

Each of Warren Township's eleven elementary schools currently use SMART Boards, but the numbers available vary across the district. Through grant funding, 15 additional SMART Boards will be purchased and placed within six schools to ensure equitable distribution among schools and to place at least seven Boards in each elementary.

Nine exceptional Warren Township teachers, experienced in engaging students in their effective use of SMART Board technologies, will serve as SMART Board Mentor Teachers. Through continuous and collaborative training activities detailed within the proposal's Budget for Activities/Timelines/Costs, these expert mentors will train and support both Warren Township and New Castle teacher-recipients of technologies provided under this grant. The development of engaging instructional strategies and lessons linked to Indiana Academic Standards will be the focus of all professional development activities. Periodic Classroom Walk-Through Observations (detailed in the Formative & Summative Evaluation section), will show teachers' professional growth and areas needing further assistance.

GOALS/OBJECTIVES

  NCCSC's 5 Project Goals/Objectives

1) Expand access of SMART Board technologies for each of the district's seven elementary schools.

2) Expand access of Netbook technologies for three of the district's seven elementary schools determined to have the greatest need.

3) Effectively use technology in schools to increase student academic achievement as measured through formative assessments (M-Class and Acuity) and ISTEP+ as the summative measure. (See Formative & Summative Evaluation section for specific targets)

4) Increase the number of NCCSC teachers making effective use of technology to enhance instruction, engage students, and to address student learning needs, as measured by a Classroom Walk-Through Observation Tool that will be used across the entire grant period. (Observation Tool detailed in Formative & Summative Evaluation section)

5) Provide collaborative, ongoing professional development for: a) New Castle teachers on the integration of technology for addressing content, instruction, and assessment with common curriculum pacing guides and assessment calendars based on the Indiana Academic Standards, mCLASS, and Acuity in the areas of Language Arts and Math and b) New Castle and Warren Township teachers through relevant and continuous training provided by nine (9) highly-effective SMART Board Mentor Teachers from Warren Township. (See Activities/Timeline/Costs detailed descriptions in Budget section)

Warren Township's 4 Project Goals/Objectives

1) Expand access of SMART Board technologies for six schools determined as highest-need across the district¿s eleven elementary schools.

2) Effectively use technology in schools to increase student academic achievement as measured through formative assessments (M-Class and Acuity) and ISTEP+ as the summative measure. (See Formative & Summative Evaluation section for specific targets)

3) Increase the number of Warren Township teachers making effective use of technology to enhance instruction, engage students, and to address student learning needs, as measured by a Classroom Walk-Through Observation Tool that will be used across the entire grant period. (Observation Tool detailed in Formative & Summative Evaluation section)

4) Provide collaborative, ongoing professional development for Warren Township and New Castle teachers through relevant and continuous training provided by nine (9) highly-effective SMART Board Mentor Teachers from Warren Township. (See Activities/Timeline/Costs detailed descriptions in Budget section)

METHODS/ACTIVITIES

  NCCSC will fully implement the 8-Step Process for school improvement in the 2010-2011 school year. NCCSC is just in the beginning stages of implementing this process and has been training a leadership team from each of the seven elementary schools in the process. Key tenets include using data to drive

decisions, employing an Instructional Calendar for pacing the teaching of academic standards, and sustaining an instructional focus ¿ meaning that lessons target the specific needs of all students. Grade level teachers from the entire district will be analyzing Indiana Academic Standards and assessment data from ISTEP+, mCLASS, and Acuity during the 2009-2010 school year to develop a common pacing guide and assessment calendar in the areas of E/LA and Math to implement in the 2010-2011 school year.

NCCSC implemented the use of common assessments in grades K-6 this year by implementing mCLASS Reading and Math assessments in grades K-2 and Acuity Diagnostic Assessments in grades 3-6. The technology provided through this grant will enable teachers to more effectively implement the learning activities provided through these programs as part of daily learning. All grade level teachers will participate in on going and extensive professional development activities which will enable teachers to use the data from the mCLASS and Acuity assessments to develop and assign activities at Netbook stations for students to complete. Due to extremely limited computer access, Netbooks provided to schools will immediately increase the student access to taking assessments and completing assignments based on student performance on assessments.

Over several years, Warren Township elementary schools that once had 20% passing rates on ISTEP+ now have 70% of students passing by closely following a carefully-designed 8-Step Process for school improvement. Key tenets include using data to drive decisions, employing an Instructional Calendar for pacing the teaching of academic standards, and sustaining an instructional focus ¿ meaning that lessons target the specific needs of all students.

Spring 2009 ISTEP+

	E/LA			Math		
	Gr 3	Gr 4	Gr 5	Gr 3	Gr 4	Gr 5
Heather Hills	61%	65%	56%	49%	68%	87%
Pleasant Run	83%	72%	61%	77%	64%	83%
Eastridge	62%	46%	65%	70%	54%	79%
Liberty Park	76%	67%	62%	71%	51%	74%
Moorhead	68%	70%	66%	66%	73%	75%
Grassy Creek	62%	65%	62%	57%	66%	77%
District AVE	71%	68%	64%	70%	63%	79%

Data analysis of spring 2009 ISTEP+ English/Language Arts results shows that across six schools, students performed below the district average in 12 grade levels (while only eight performed below the district average in Math).

Using SMART Board technologies, nine talented Mentor Teachers through year-long scheduled trainings and intermittent technical assistance -- will help Project Teachers develop lessons specific to their grade level and aligned to E/LA standards and the district's Instructional Calendar.

Mentors will show how to change Project Teachers' instructional practices by integrating stimulating technology into lessons that will increase students' motivation and engagement, improve their productivity with technology proficiencies, and enhance collaborative work in literacy stations. Teachers will learn how to access useful tools and websites to enhance the way students learn, practice, and interact in daily lessons. Interactive SMART Board lessons will take the focus off of the teachers and back onto their students -- making technology a real and relevant tool for learning.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For all of its benefits, technology can be intimidating for the novice user. Communication, practice, and teacher confidence are keys to successfully integrating technology into the classroom. Teachers with a strong support system, who receive effective training, can learn how to do anything with technology.

Date   PD Activities

2010 Feb, Apr, Nov 2011 Jan, Mar NC grade level meetings for: 1. review data from mCLASS/Acuity reports, 2. learn about and create activity assignments based on assessment data, 3. learn how to develop and create custom assessments on Acuity

2010 Feb   9 Warren Mentor Teachers participate in planning and strategy meetings

2010 Mar   New Castle and Warren project teachers observe SMART Board integration in Mentor Teachers' classrooms

2010 Mar   Warren SMART Board Mentor Teachers plan summer collaborative trainings

2010 Apr   Warren Mentor Teachers visit New Castle schools to assist with SMART Board integration

2010 Apr   Warren project teachers receive after-school PD training from Mentors

2010 June-Aug NC Curriculum and Assessment Leadership Teams collaborate over 3 days

2010 June - Aug	Advanced "Train the Trainer" 1-day workshop for Warren teachers (1/2 day SMART Ed and 1/2 day Mentors)

2010	June - Aug	SMART Board Boot Camp: New Castle & Warren teachers collaborate over 2 days

2010 Oct	Video conferencing with New Castle for progress monitoring on classroom integration

2010 Oct	NC teachers after school PD to monitor integration process and address needs

2010 Oct	Warren teachers after school PD to monitor integration process and address needs

2010 Nov	Warren Mentors visit New Castle to address integration issues identified in Oct video conference

2011 Mar	New Castle project teachers visit Warren mentor classrooms

2011 Apr	NC teachers after school PD to monitor integration process and address needs

2011 Apr	After school PD for Warren project teachers

As delineated in this chart, professional development activities under this project begin in February 2010 and extend through April 2011.

The Warren Township Mentor teachers begin their planning and strategy meetings in February. This spring, New Castle teachers will visit three Warren Township schools to observe SMART Board integration in Mentor Teacher classrooms. Warren Township¿s 15 project teachers also will participate in these onsite visits.

This first-hand experience will help teachers apply the SMART Ed Technologies¿ 90-minute introductory training provided both districts' Project Teachers in the period preceding onsite school observations.

At the heart of the professional development plan is the intensive summer training. NCCSC will have three full days dedicated to curriculum and assessment development using Acuity. It is also in the summer that NCCSC and Warren project teachers will receive two full days of collaborative support.

Day 1: Half-day SMART Ed Training and half-day curriculum development with Mentor Teachers, aligned to Indiana Academic Standards and each district¿s Instructional Calendar.

Day 2: Continued work in developing lessons covering curricular content covered in the first three weeks of the upcoming school year. By the close of Day 2, project teachers will have developed interactive, engaging lessons using SMART Board technologies that will be demonstrated for all Boot

Camp participants. Most importantly, teachers will leave the workshop with exciting, relevant lessons that teachers can immediately use at the beginning of the 2010-11 school year. SMART Boards will be used daily as engaged students touch and interact as a whole group, small group, and with partners.

Throughout the project period, activities are planned to continuously support teachers' effective use of technology and to address any concerns.

FORMATIVE/SUMMATIVE EVALUATION

Through the effective integration of SMART Board and Netbook technology and professional development support of its project teachers, NCCSC will use formative and summative assessments to measure the success of its Cadre 3 initiative.

Success will be measured at two levels:

*Increased student achievement; and

*Increased teacher proficiency.

Increased student achievement will be demonstrated through the following measures:

2009 ISTEP+ E/LA

District Average

Gr 3	Gr4	Gr 5	Gr 6
74%	75%	70%	71%

2009 ISTEP+ Math

District Average

Gr 3	Gr4	Gr 5	Gr 6
73%	67%	72%	77%

(1)	Summative Data: Classroom proficiency rates on spring 2011 ISTEP+ will meet or exceed the district¿s grade-level spring 2009 ISTEP+ average results.

(2)   Formative Data: Across four 2010-11 Acuity Diagnostic E/LA and Math benchmark assessments, students will demonstrate mastery of individual standard indicators by scoring in Tier 3 or 4.

Through the effective integration of SMART Board technology and professional development support of its 15 recipient project teachers, Warren Township will use formative and summative assessments to measure the success of its Cadre 3 initiative.

Success will be measured at two levels:

*Increased student achievement; and

*Increased teacher proficiency.

Increased student achievement will be demonstrated through the following measures:

2009 ISTEP+ E/LA

District Average

Gr 3	Gr4	Gr 5
71%	70%	64%

(3)   Summative Data: Project teachers¿ classroom proficiency rates on spring 2011 ISTEP+ will meet or exceed the district¿s grade-level spring 2009 ISTEP+ average results.

(4)   Formative Data: Across three 2010-11 Acuity Predictive E/LA benchmark assessments, project teachers will reduce percentages of students scoring at Performance Tiers 1 & 2. (Those scoring at Tiers 3 & 4 have the greatest likelihood of passing ISTEP+.) Based on current data, the E/LA standards & indicators selected to measure student progress are those identified as highest-need for the district.

2009-10 Acuity Predictive Language Arts Assessment Report

	2009 Sept/Oct	2010 Sept/Oct	2010 Nov/Dec	2011 Feb
District	% in Tiers 1 & 2	% in Project Classroom	% in Project Classroom	% in Project Classroom
Gr 3	Standard 3.2.6	Locate appropriate & significant text info	80%	
Gr 4	Standard 4.3.5	Define figurative language	71%	
Gr 5	Standard 5.5.5	Use varied word choices	55%	

NCCSC and Warren Township will both measure increased teacher proficiency by using the tool shown below. Project teachers' SMART Board instruction will be observed at least quarterly to record their progress to effectively use technology to enhance instruction, engage students, and address student learning needs. Findings also will be used to inform the focus of professional development activities. Success will be demonstrated when all teachers are minimally rated on the observation tool as having "Clear knowledge. Could be peer leader."

Classroom Walk-Through SMART Board Observations

Teacher Name: Date:

Academic Standard Focus/Objective of Lesson/Activity:

Weak	Basic	Strong	Exemplary
Little or no evidence of the Outcome	Beginning of -- or some evidence of the Outcome	Detailed and consistent evidence of the Outcome	Highly creative, interactive and integrated use of technological tools

Assessment Outcomes

Observed activity demonstrated appropriate use of technology

Use of technology was part of seamless student learning

Teacher demonstrated confidence & knowledge in the effective use of technology

Students demonstrated that they were accustomed to using the technology

Students were engaged as active learners

The lesson/activity was enhanced through technology

Other

Teacher demonstrated   ¿   Need for additional Professional Development   Need for peer as

LOCAL MATCH

 $49,084

NCCSC is committing $49,084.00 in matching funds for this project. NCCSC has used local monies to leverage support of Netbook purchases within the district. Capital Projects, Title 1 Stimulus, Title 1, and Title 5 funds expended in support of Netbooks since July 2009 = $198640.59. Local monies have also been leveraged to provide formCLASS and Acuity Technologies to be implemented in the classroom in 2009 = $35284.00 Corporation professional development funds expended in support of professional development opportunities for teachers to learn about mCLASS and Acuity use in the classroom since July 2009= $ 9200.00 and an additional $4600.00 is expected to be expended in the spring of 2010 for this same purpose. Individual buildings have access to technology funds through their capital project accounts and will continue to increase the amount of technology in 2010 by purchasing SMART Boards and Netbooks for classroom use.

MSD of Warren Township has used local monies to leverage support of SMART Board purchases and set ups across its district. Within its Capital Projects Technology Budget, the district has allocated $200,000 for school technology projects during FY 2010. Funds expended, to date, in support of technology that supports SMART Boards includes:

        Elementary Schools: $56,186.54

        High Schools: $24,656.06

Equipment includes laptops, SMART Boards, projectors, document cameras, and Flip video cameras -- all of which can be used in conjunction with SMART Boards.

Warren also recently invested $60,000 of its Technology Budget to support a pilot in three elementary schools for classroom iPod Touch units. One of our Cadre 3 project Mentor Teachers already has students using iPod Touch with his SMART Board.

This year, grants awarded by the IDOE included equipment that supports SMART Board technologies:

Tech Planning Grant: $109,423.00 for SMART Boards, ceiling mounted projectors & screens for Warren Central High School English teachers

Cadre 1 EETT $30,877.00 for SMART Board set ups with projectors

                      $50,091.00 for Wireless Labs in Algebra I classrooms

As a recipient of Cadre 1 grant funds, four completed Smart Board set ups are in place for Algebra I high school students who are actively engaged in learning through the use of this instructional experience in their classrooms. An onsite visit by an Indiana Department of Education consultant verified that we are on-track for programmatic, fiscal, and professional development activities expected under that award.

Effective stewards of federal, State and local funds, Warren Township consistently has demonstrated its capacity to implement technology projects and to assume additional grant award monies to successfully extend efforts that will increase student learning.

Cadre 3 grant funds will enable Warren Township to extend technology initiatives by addressing the inequities of distribution of SMART Boards across its eleven elementary schools. As demonstrated above, local fund contributions far exceed the Matching Funds expectations of this grant.

PARTNERSHIPS

  Under the leadership of its superintendent, Dr. Peggy Hinckley and with the full support of the district¿s Board of Education, MSD of Warren Township has embraced a continuous improvement model. The Plan-Do-Check-Act for closing achievement gaps through an 8-Step Process is the impetus for the instructional strategies that will support this proposal.

Warren¿s 8-Step Process calls for:

¿   Data disaggregation

¿   An Instructional Calendar (timeline) for pacing the teaching of required academic standards

¿   Instructional focus, meaning lessons must target the specific needs of all students in their comprehension of Indiana Academic Standards

¿ Assessment of student progress, using formative assessments

¿ Tutorials for students who do not master concepts and skills measured on those assessments

¿ Enrichment for those who do

¿ Maintenance, or ¿Re-teaching¿ to reinforce concepts and skills previously taught; and

¿ Continuous monitoring of student progress

Recognizing the effectiveness of this improvement model, the IDOE is currently working with a number of high-need districts and schools to provide year-long training in support of its implementation. As part of the DOE training, New Castle participated in onsite visits to six of the Warren Township elementary schools to meet with staff and learn about the components of the 8-Step Process.

During those observations, New Castle staff, impressed with Warren staffs' expertise in effectively using SMART Boards to engage students and increase learning, sought a partnership with the district. Warren is pleased to support New Castle teachers¿ professional development in effectively integrating technology purchased through this grant into their classroom instruction. Year-long collaborative efforts, led by exemplary Mentor Teachers and supported by onsite classroom demonstrations, will be facilitated by our partner, Warren Township, from March 2010 through March 2011.

As a recipient of an EETT Cadre 1 grant, MSD of Warren Township is able to demonstrate its effective implementation and progress monitoring of grant components for its High School Algebra I project. Both programmatically and fiscally, Warren is on-track, on-time, and on-task with its technology purchases, professional development, and formative assessments detailed within that grant application. Findings from an onsite visit conducted by the IDOE resulted in very positive feedback. Through its leadership and internal accountability systems, Warren Township can ensure its effective implementation and oversight of additional projects funded through the Cadre 3 initiative.